

Minutes of the Veneta Planning Commission

September 1, 2020

Present: Len Goodwin, Commission Chair; Lily Rees, Commissioner; Craig Soderberg, Commissioner; David Voltz, Commissioner

Others: Lisa Garbett, Associate Planner; Evan MacKenzie, Community Development Director; Darci Henneman, City Recorder

I. REVIEW AGENDA

Chair, Len Goodwin called the Veneta Planning Commission to order at 6:39 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: David Voltz made a motion to approve the May 5, 2020 minutes. Craig Soderberg seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 3-0.

IV. DISCUSS CODE UPDATES

Community Development Director (CDD) MacKenzie said as he has looked through the code, he realized that there are some inconsistencies. In order to make all of them work in several zones, he created a table. He said we have several difference uses and they are referred to with different names, as well as where they're allowed, is inconsistent such as food service and office. He said we allow food service in different zones but under different names, he gave an example, a restaurant is allowed in Broadway/Commercial (BC), however, eating and drinking establishments are not. Eating and drinking establishments are allowed in Community/Commercial (CC), Highway/Commercial (HC), Industrial/Commercial (IC), and Residential/Commercial (RC), but not BC. He said they're the same thing but are allowed in our code in different ways and in different zones. They're the same thing and they should be referred to with the same name. He said we should have one inclusive term for food service for consistency in all zones. The other item is office type use. We allow those in different zones inconsistently. Medical clinics are a little different but personal services, professional, financial and business services, personal business services, offices are all listed and only listed in IC but it's the same use as financial use which are allowed in HC, BC, and RC but we don't allow offices because it's not listed.

In response to questions from Commissioner Voltz, CDD MacKenzie said a lot of our zone language was independent of the other zones so you can't see how it compares across zones and you don't realize that we have duplicated terms. He said that makes it difficult to apply the ordinance, and makes it easily challenged. He would like to consolidate and clean it up for the Planning Commission to review, then amend the zones to put it in table form. He said text will still be included but most of the information will be in table form. He said the uses allowed today will be allowed tomorrow, he will make every effort to make sure we're not taking anything away.

At 6:37 p.m. Commissioner Rees joined the meeting via telephone.

CDD MacKenzie asked the Commissioners to provide any input on updating the codes and removing all of the duplicates. He said we would have one for residential and one for commercial/industrial.

In response to a question from Commissioner Soderberg, CDD MacKenzie suggested some of the definitions will be changed and we'll replace all of the office definitions with "general office use" to make the definitions more generalized.

Chair Goodwin said part of the reason there are so many definitions in the code, is when a new business comes in, the code is amended to allow it but it may not be included in other related sections of the code.

CDD MacKenzie said he would ultimately like the Commercial zones to be moved to a form-based code which would regulate the form of the building and not what's happening in the building.

Chair Goodwin said there are always some glitches like a bakery outlet, which would be an exception but we would deal with it.

Commissioner Voltz said some of the abbreviations can be difficult to comprehend and suggested some of them could be a little more user friendly.

Chair Goodwin suggested including a glossary somewhere in the code.

In response to a question from Commissioner Voltz, CDD MacKenzie said the Comprehensive Plan should be a guide. Most Comprehensive Plans include a table with various Comp Plan designations and implementation zones and asked what our intentions are. We should be consistent with that.

Chair Goodwin suggested shying away from changing the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Soderberg commented that he prefers the simplification, if something comes in, then we deal with it then.

In response to a question from Commissioner Voltz, AP Garbett said she recalls inquiries about specific uses that weren't defined in the code so staff asked the Planning Commission for an interpretation if that use falls into a listed category. She said part of staff's research could include looking at previous Planning Commission interpretations and decisions. She said overall this code amendment is going to be really helpful for staff.

CDD MacKenzie said another issue he would like to discuss is off-street parking. He said currently the building diagonally across from the Service Center has two parking spaces and is currently unoccupied. He said in its current condition, it cannot be occupied because of the lack of off-street parking. He said this building is 1300 sq. ft. and our current parking requirements for retail, call for three parking spaces, office - four spaces, and a restaurant would require seven. With two spaces, they would need to wall off a portion of the building and not occupy it. He provided an example that an undeveloped 8800 sq. ft. lot with a 4000 sq. ft. single story building in Broadway/Commercial would require 20 spaces if it were a restaurant, 13 for an office, and retail would require 10. Ten parking spaces would consume 3000 sq. ft. of impervious surface which would require stormwater drainage. He said a two story building with mixed use would require even more parking spaces. He said basically with the current off-street parking requirements, you cannot build a two story building in Broadway/Commercial zone unless 60% of the site is dedicated to parking.

In response to a question from Commissioner Soderberg, CDD MacKenzie said working with our current off-street requirements means we are not going to have a pedestrian oriented downtown with what we currently have.

In response to questions from Commissioner Voltz, CDD MacKenzie said we have an allowance that you can request a 50% reduction in off-street parking but it's still not enough. He proposed that we eliminate off-street parking requirements in Broadway/Commercial zone and cut it to half along Territorial Rd. He said we let the market decide how much parking to build. If a business wants to use part of their lot for parking, they can do so but we will not require it. We turn our minimums into maximums and we require ADA parking and that's it. We have loads of parking in our downtown but no reason to park there. He said if every spot was filled up, we would still have an abundance of parking. He said the likelihood that every business will be filled at capacity at the same time is extremely slim. He said office peak hours are during

the day, restaurant peak hours are in the evening so they can share the parking. He said people can park on the street and walk.

In response to questions from Commissioner Voltz, CDD MacKenzie said parking lots generate no revenue for the business or for the City, they also generate no assessed value, and we get very little tax dollars from them.

Chair Goodwin said generally it's an idea that ends up being counterproductive and people don't mind walking a couple of blocks, and that isn't really an issue. He said the entire street behind Broadway is available for parking.

In response to a question from Commissioner Voltz, CDD MacKenzie said City Hall, Veneta Elementary, the post office, and bank parking lots are all empty in the evening. He said we have plenty of parking for large events. He said let's put everything we have to use rather than make people build their own and make it easier to develop that's potentially less expensive.

Chair Goodwin said limiting or reducing the amount of impervious surface, provides for more natural settings, landscaping, trees, and outdoor seating, instead of asphalt.

In response to a question from Commissioner Voltz, AP Garbett said just seeing folks trying to develop on Broadway, the size of the lots are relatively small and it's difficult for applicants to comply with off-street parking requirements, plus the stormwater systems that go with that. She said the Retail Pop up District reflects that we do have smaller entrepreneurs that want to locate in this area. So taking the burden off some of the expenses, may make it easier to pull the trigger to build some infrastructure. She said the applicant would still be required to meet state requirements for ADA parking so we can leave that in the code.

CDD MacKenzie said we would probably be looking at once a certain threshold was met, they would be required to provide ADA parking. He said during hours they are not open, they could use it as a loading space also. We could abandon all off-street parking requirements and if we do that, the ADA requirements may go away. He said he would check with the building official about how ADA parking requirements would apply to new construction.

Chair Goodwin suggested we provide ADA parking with a dedicated on-street space.

CDD MacKenzie said the only problem with on-street is that the space beside the vehicle, you don't always have the surrounding area available.

In response to a question from Chair Soderberg, CDD MacKenzie said could you also do time restrictions for on-street parking. He said corner spots could have 15 minute limits to keep them open and available.

In response to a question from Commissioner Voltz, CDD MacKenzie said on-street parking in downtown residential areas will probably only happen when we have events.

Commissioner Voltz suggested we create a flex space that can be a play area or park and also a parking lot when needed.

CDD MacKenzie said that's when we'd rely on the school, bank, and post office parking lots.

Commissioner Voltz said if we're going to use a school parking lot, we should pay for resurfacing or parking lot upgrades.

CDD MacKenzie said staff has already talked about using the back field when school is not in session.

Commissioner Soderberg said on Saturdays, the Farmers' Market is a happening place from 10:00 to 2:00 and people have to walk a long ways.

CDD MacKenzie said when people say there's a parking problem, that's a good thing because that means that you have more people demanding your service then you have supply for.

Chair Goodwin suggested we take the approach that we deal and solve the issue when it becomes a problem.

There was a brief discussion about the transportation plan.

Commissioner Voltz suggested we could also charge a parking fee.

MOTION: Commissioner Soderberg made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend the City Council direct staff to initiate formal amendments to the Land Development Ordinance as suggested herein and that staff include waiving off-street parking in the Broadway/Commercial zone in those code amendments. Commissioner Voltz seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 4-0.

V. OTHER

AP Garbett said she received two Type A Tree Removal permits, one on Allure St. and one on 3rd St. She said a subdivision application for a 12 lot, single family homes development was submitted and reviewed for completeness. Staff deemed it incomplete in terms of stormwater. This subdivision is north of Cheney Dr., where Oak Island dead ends. She said a Type C Tree Removal permit was part of that subdivision.

In response to a question from Commissioner Voltz, AP Garbett said there is a wetland on the lot and the developer is required to submit an application for a wetland variance.

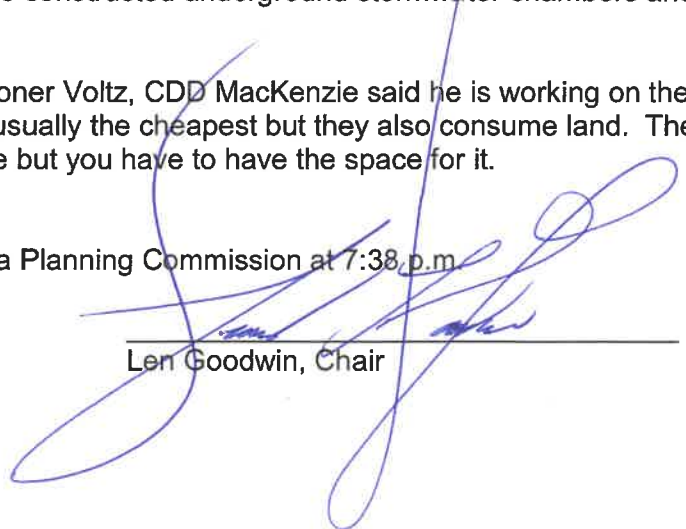
AP Garbett said Baxter Plumbing has decided to halt their construction project on Loten Way. She said due to construction prices and delays, they've decided not to move forward with their project. She said they heard from the architect that their planned underground stormwater chamber was expensive so they're looking at reworking their site plan. She said a site plan amendment could be triggered for altering their drainage proposal and the City Engineer had concerns about how that may affect neighboring properties given their interest in the project.

In response to a question from Commissioner Voltz, AP Garbett said these are issues for anyone that develops. She said the consultants are balancing the budget and she said we would hope that developers are taking costs into consideration when they present their plans. She said it's not up to us to design their system. She said Fern Ridge Self-storage constructed underground stormwater chambers and it's really expensive.

In response to questions from Commissioner Voltz, CDD MacKenzie said he is working on the stormwater manual. He said natural processes are usually the cheapest but they also consume land. The typical swale method is not massively expensive but you have to have the space for it.


VI. ADJOURN

Chair Len Goodwin adjourned the Veneta Planning Commission at 7:38 p.m.



Len Goodwin, Chair

ATTEST:



Darci Henneman, City Recorder
(Minutes prepared by DHenneman)